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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [NATO](#) [EUN](#) [GM](#) [UP](#)

SUBJECT: GERMANY: DOWNBEAT ABOUT PROSPECTS IN UKRAINE

REF: KYIV 00465

Classified By: CDA JOHN M. KOENIG FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. Germany views Ukraine as a significant partner, but Berlin is frustrated with the continued inability of President Yushchenko and Prime Minister Tymoshenko to work together. Contacts hope that the current economic crisis will force the two to stop "squabbling" and focus on the "welfare of the country," but are not optimistic that Yushchenko and Tymoshenko are capable of such statesmanship. Germany fears for the political stability of the country, and sees the two leaders as putting the "legacy of the Orange Revolution" in danger, instead of overcoming their differences to improve Ukraine's situation. The MFA and Chancellery divisions responsible for Ukraine appear largely in agreement on this dim appraisal of Ukraine's future, but will continue pushing the two leaders to cooperate in order to preserve the gains of the Orange Revolution. Germany likely will continue pressuring Yushchenko and Tymoshenko to work together, and officials hope the U.S. is doing the same. END SUMMARY.

DIRE TIMES CALL FOR EXTREME MEASURES...EVEN COOPERATION?

¶2. (C) The MFA and Chancellery are frustrated in their efforts to pressure Yushchenko and Tymoshenko to work together, and are left hoping that the economic and financial crisis has made conditions terrible enough in Ukraine to force the two out of their "political sparring." According to Chancellery Deputy Head of Former Soviet Union and Eastern European Division Israng, the feud in Ukraine has become so bad that the entire system -- economic and political -- has been called into question. Although the two sides have reportedly now agreed to regular meetings, Israng discounts this development with the sober observation that "promises have been made before and nothing came of them."

¶3. (C) Israng and MFA Deputy Head of Russia, Ukraine, and Central Asia Division Simon point to the recent regional elections in western Ukraine -- where a right-wing extremist party won a plurality of votes -- as a worrying sign that extremism is growing. Yushchenko and Tymoshenko are discrediting themselves and allowing new extremist groups to grow stronger, according to Israng. The Chancellery and MFA hope that this development may spur Yushchenko and Tymoshenko to set their animosity aside, but see such cooperation as a long shot.

GERMAN GIVES CONSISTENT MESSAGE

¶4. (C) Merkel is in close contact with both Yushchenko and Tymoshenko and emphasizes the need for cooperation in each conversation, according to Israng. NSA Heusgen also recently reiterated this message, and Germany reinforces the message at lower levels as well.

¶5. (C) According to Israng and Simon, Germany views Ukraine as a valuable partner, and contacts point to the establishment of a new consulate general in Donetsk as clear

evidence of how seriously Germany takes Ukraine. Simon notes that although the MFA is facing budget cuts, endangering several existing consulates, the MFA was able to garner support for the new consulate general. The Chancellery has no comment on the possibility of a Yushchenko visit to Berlin, but stresses the need for the two Ukrainian leaders to cooperate (thus supporting reftel,s conclusion that a visit is unlikely in the near term).

16. (C) However, the MFA and Chancellery recognize that their relations with Kyiv are not "always easy" (see reftel) due to the constant German emphasis on the need for cooperation, and the perception that Germany puts the "brakes on many Ukrainian foreign policy goals." According to Israng, while the message irritated the Ukrainians before, they could ignore the plea for cooperation because of the economic good times. He noted that German-Ukrainian relations had recently improved, indicating that Ukrainian leaders are finally coming to realize they need to work together -- but he recognized that the Yushchenko-Tymoshenko relationship is still dysfunctional. Simon argues that Ukraine always has been prickly toward Germany because it perceives Germany as "pushing the brakes" on EU and NATO membership and a visa waiver program. "It is easier to blame Germany for being the brakes rather than recognizing that Ukraine itself has not fulfilled the criteria." MFA Desk Officer for EU Relations to the Former Soviet Union Richter admits that Ukraine overall is "disappointed with Germany offering peanuts through the EU's new Eastern Partnership" rather than extending a real prospect for future EU membership.

17. (C) COMMENT. While hopeful that the severity of economic

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and political situation will act as a wake-up call, Germany sees little probability of Yushchenko and Tymoshenko setting aside their differences "to focus on the good of the country." Germany is likely to continue to push for cooperation at all levels of government engagement, and officials hope the U.S. is doing the same.
Koenig